

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 SP-02

AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05 RSC-01 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15

STR-01 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-01 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, MX

SUBJECT: MEXICAN POSITION AT OAS SPECIAL SESSION JAN. 20

REF STATE 011289

1. EMBECONCOUN AND ECONOFF CALLED EARLY AFTERNOON JAN 17 ON AMBASSADOR MARIO ESPINOSA DE LOS REYES, DIRECTOR IN CHIEF, SECRETARIAT FOREIGN RELATIONS, TO DISCUSS TRADE LAW AND SPECIAL SESSION OAS PERMANENT COUNCIL JAN 20.

2. AMBASSADOR ESPINOSA INFORMED EMBOFFS THAT HE HAD BEEN IN RECENT COMMUNICATION WITH AMBASSADOR DE LA COLINA (MEX REP OAS), WHO HAD INDICATED THAT SPECIAL SESSION CALLED SOLELY TO DETERMINE: (1) WHETHER GROUNDS EXIST FOR CONVENING EARLY OAS MEETING TO DISCUSS TRADE LAW; (2) AT WHAT LEVEL AND UNDER WHAT RUBRIC MEETING SHOULD BE. GOM OFFICIAL DID NOT THINK THAT SPECIAL SESSION WOULD GET INTO SUBSTANTIVE, TECHNICAL ISSUES OF NEW LAW. EMBOFF INDICATED (PER PARA 3 REFTEL) THAT U.S. WILL BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS TRADE ACT, AND WILL HAVE TECHNICAL EXPERTS ON THE ACT PRESENT. AMBASSADOR
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ESPINOSA WAVED OFF THAT POINT, REITERATING THAT MONDAY MEETING WOULD BE "POLITICAL" AND "PROCEDURAL." HE STATED THAT MEXICO WOULD SUPPORT SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER OAS MEETINGS ON BILL, BUT DID NOT ELABORATE AS TO LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION OR OTHER CONTEXT.

3. EMBOFFS HAD BROUGHT ADDITIONAL COPIES VARIOUS RECENT BRIEFING MATERIALS ON TRADE LAW TO FONOFF OFFICIAL ALREADY CIRCULATED FONOFF, TREASURY, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, (INCLUDING COPY OF LAW, ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS MEMORANDA AND PRESS

STATEMENTS, AND OTHER PAPERS), AND PRESENTED THESE TO HIM WITH COMMENT THAT THERE SEEMED TO BE EXTENSIVE PRESS MIS-UNDERSTANDING ABOUT NEW LAW AND ITS EFFECTS ON MEXICO. EMBOFF MADE POINT THAT WHILE IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT NEWSMEN MIGHT NOT BE INFORMED AS TO LAW, IT WAS MOST UNFORTUNATE THAT GOM OFFICIALS, SUCH AS SR. CANAVATI, VICE-DIRECTOR OF MEXICAN FOREIGN TRADE INSTITUTE, WOULD MAKE STATEMENTS SUCH AS THOSE HEADLINED JAN. 17 IN LEFT-WING EXCELSIOR TO EFFECT THAT NEW TRADE LAW WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT 50 PERCENT OF MEXICO'S EXPORTS TO U.S.

4. AMB. ESPINOSA AGREED THAT CANAVATI'S STATEMENTS ERRONEOUS AND UNFORTUNATE, AND INDICATED THAT HE WAS GOING TO CALL INACCURACIES TO CANAVATI'S ATTENTION TODAY. HE EXPLAINED THAT THIRD AND FOURTH LEVEL GOM OFFICIALS WERE NOW ENGAGED IN TRADITIONAL JOCKEYING FOR HIGH VISIBILITY (WITH BETTER JOBS DURING NEXT ADMINISTRATION IN MIND) AS MEXICAN POLITICAL SCENE PREPARES FOR SELECTION THIS FALL OF PRI PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. REMARKS SUCH AS CANAVATI'S AMB. ESPINOSA SUGGESTED, SHOULD BE SEEN IN THIS POLITICAL CONTEXT. (AT THIS POINT, ESPINOSA ALSO REFERRED TO RECENT STRONG CRITICISM IN EXCELSIOR OF FONSEC RABASA AS SOFT ON U.S.)

5. AMB. ESPINOSA HAD INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS TO MAKE ABOUT FONSEC RABASA-SECRETARY KISSINGER MEETING, WHICH HE ATTENDED (IN COMPANY HE SAID OF ASST. SECRETARY ROGERS AND MEXICAN AMB. TO U.S. JOSE JUAN DE OLLOQUI). HE DESCRIBED MEETING AS FRANK AND FRIENDLY, AND EXPRESSED VIEW THAT PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN SECRETARY AND FONSEC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IS HIGHLY PRIZED IN MEXICO. HE FELT THAT MOST IMPORTANT RESULT OF MEETING WAS SECRETARY'S PROMISE TO CONSULT OF ANY ACTIONS WHICH U.S. TAKES VIS-A-VIS NEW LAW WHICH MIGHT AFFECT MEXICO, I.E. REMOVAL OF ITEM FROM GSP LIST. HE NOTED THAT MEXICO ALSO SOUGHT SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO \$25 MILLION, 50 PERCENT RULE, NOTING THAT SOME SEVEN PRODUCTS NOW ON TENTATIVE GSP LIST WOULD BE AFFECTED. ESPINOSA ADDED THAT

TWO AIDE-MEMOIRES ON MEXICAN POSITION ON TRADE LAW WERE
REALISTIC AND SEEMED WELL-RECEIVED BY SECRETARY.

6. COMMENT: IT IS APPARENT THAT KEY FONOFF OFFICIALS SUCH AS
AMB. ESPINOSA ARE WELL INFORMED ON TRADE LAW AND DISPOSED
TO DISCUSS IT IN REASONABLE MANNER. WE HOPE THAT SAME WILL BE
TRUE WITH MEX OAS DEL IN WASHINGTON, BUT WE ARE CONCERNED
ABOUT AMB. ESPINOSA'S REFERENCE TO MONDAY OAS MEETING AS BEING
IN PART "POLITICAL."

7. ACTION REQUESTED: AS WE ONLY HAVE MEXICAN SIDE OF SECRETARY'S
CONVERSATION WITH RABASA (PARA 5) WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SUBSTANCE OF KISSINGER/RABASA MEETING.
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